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UNCLAS MONTREAL 000221

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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR CELLUCCI'S FAREWELL VISIT TO MONTREAL

1. SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR CELLUCCI HAD A FULL ITINERARY OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS ACTIVITIES FOR HIS FEBRUARY 17 FAREWELL VISIT TO MONTREAL. A KEYNOTE SPEAKER AT MCGILL'S HIGH-PROFILE "CANADA IN THE WORLD" CONFERENCE, THE AMBASSADOR ALSO MET WITH SCHOLARS AND BOARD MEMBERS AT THE INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH ON PUBLIC POLICY (IRPP), AND WAS GUEST OF HONOR AT CONSUL GENERAL BERNADETTE ALLEN'S RECEPTION FOR CONTACTS IN BORDER SECURITY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT FIELDS. WHILE MEDIA INTEREST IN THE STORY OF THE DAY - SECURITY BREACHES AT HYDRO QUEBEC INSTALLATIONS IN JAMES BAY - SPARKED COVERAGE OF THE AMBASSADOR'S PRESENCE, HE DELIVERED A LASTING MESSAGE ON ENDURING U.S.-CANADA FRIENDSHIP, AND THE MANY VALUES AND GOALS THAT CANADIANS AND AMERICANS SHARE. END SUMMARY.

2. THE MCGILL INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF CANADA TIMED ITS "CANADA IN THE WORLD CONFERENCE" TO OCCUR AS THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT WAS RELEASING ITS FIRST FOREIGN POLICY REVIEW STATEMENT SINCE 1995. HOWEVER, THE STATEMENT WAS STILL BEING PRODUCED AS THE CONFERENCE TOOK PLACE (REPORTEDLY, OXFORD UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR SHEILA WALSH HAS BEEN CONTRACTED TO EDIT THE DOCUMENT AND GIVE IT GREATER COHERENCE). THE CONFERENCE ATTRACTED SOME 375 PARTICIPANTS FROM INSTITUTIONS ALL OVER CANADA AND INCLUDED ACADEMICS, WORKS AND A WELL-KNOWN CAST OF CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY OFFICIALS, INCLUDING FOREIGN AND DEFENSE MINISTERS PETTIGREW AND GRAHAM, ALAN GOTTLIEB, RAYMOND CHRETIEN, DAVID MALONE, AND ROBERT GREENHILL, AMONG OTHERS.

(COMMENT: THE IRPP PRESIDENT HUGH SEGAL, WHO INTRODUCED THE AMBASSADOR AT THE MCGILL CONFERENCE AND HOSTED HIM LATER IN THE DAY AT A ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION, PAID THE ULTIMATE CANADIAN COMPLIMENT: HE COMPARED AMBASSADOR CELLUCCI TO JEAN BELLIVEAU, THE FAMED MONTREAL CANADIENS HOCKEY PLAYER WHO IS REMEMBERED AS A "GRAND GENTILHOMME" BUT ALSO AS SOMEONE WHO KNEW HOW TO USE HIS ELBOWS AND KNEES TO DEFEND HIS TEAM AND BE EFFECTIVE ON THE ICE. SEGAL'S POINT WAS WELL UNDERSTOOD AND WARMLY APPRECIATED BY THE AUDIENCE THAT DAY. END COMMENT.)

3. UPON THE AMBASSADOR'S ARRIVAL, MISC DIRECTOR ANTONIA MAIONI INFORMED US THAT CONFEREES HAD HEARD SEVERAL HEATED AND CRITICAL SESSIONS ABOUT THE DIRECTION OF CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY AND THE STATE OF THE CANADIAN MILITARY. THE AUDIENCE APPEARED TO FULLY APPRECIATE THE AMBASSADOR'S REFLECTIONS ON U.S.-CANADA RELATIONS, HIS RESPECTFUL SUGGESTIONS RELATED TO CANADA'S INTERNATIONAL ASPIRATIONS AND HIS HEARTFELT THANKS FOR THE FRIENDSHIP EXTENDED BY CANADIANS TO AMERICANS AFTER 9/11.

4. FOLLOWING THE AMBASSADOR'S SPEECH, THERE WAS A PRESS SCRUM HUNGRY FOR COMMENTS ON SECURITY VULNERABILITIES AT HYDRO QUEBEC INSTALLATIONS IN NORTHERN QUEBEC. THE AMBASSADOR REPEATED THE COMMENTS HE HAD MADE IN HIS SPEECH -- THAT THE SECURITY BREACHES UNDERSCORED THE NEED TO BE VIGILANT, BUT THAT HE WAS CONFIDENT CORRECTIVE MEASURES WOULD BE TAKEN - AND THEN TOOK A FEW MORE QUESTIONS ON IRAQ, SOFTWOOD LUMBER AND MISSILE DEFENSE. RICHARD LATENDRESSE OF TVA, QUEBEC'S FRANCOPHONE TV RATINGS LEADER, AND IAN MACDONALD, COLUMNIST FOR THE GAZETTE, WERE GIVEN INTERVIEWS AS WELL. MACDONALD'S PIECE, PUBLISHED 2/21, WAS VERY COMPLIMENTARY OF THE AMBASSADOR ("CELLUCCI HAS BEEN ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE U.S. ENVOYS TO CANADA DURING THE LAST 25 YEARS."). WE WERE TOLD TO EXPECT THE LATENDRESSE INTERVIEW LATER THIS WEEK.

5. THE AMBASSADOR WAS THE FEATURED GUEST AT BOTH AN IRPP ROUNDTABLE AND CG ALLEN'S RECEPTION FOR BORDER AND LAW ENFORCEMENT CONTACTS. A NUMBER OF GUESTS PAID TRIBUTE TO HIM AT THE RECEPTION: EX-QUEBEC PREMIER PIERRE MARC JOHNSON (NOW QUEBEC'S SOFTWOOD LUMBER NEGOTIATOR) THANKED THE AMBASSADOR FOR HIS ABILITY TO LISTEN, AND HIS CANDOR, ESPECIALLY RECENTLY, ON THE NATURE OF THE SOFTWOOD DISPUTE; RCMP AND SURETE DU QUEBEC OFFICERS THANKED HIM PROFUSELY FOR HIS SUPPORT OF U.S.-CANADA LAW ENFORCEMENT COOPERATION.

ALLEN